3: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913) 1918 FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

114 101 [262] perhaps, one of the largest tribes, is probably the one most satisfactory to study, for these people have been marooned for two or three centuries among the sand dunes which form their present home, attracted thither by the famous !nâras melon which provides them with food for many months in the year. I travelled in the country five years after the end of the German-Hottentot wars, during which great numbers of the older people perished, and the whole tribal system of the Hottentots received its death blow.

124 181 The Hottentots are now a passing people, who have practically given up the struggle of keeping alive their own traditions. What vitality is left is spent in the absorption of the ways of the incoming Europeans. One has, therefore, to be content with what remnants of their former customs and beliefs one can still gather from them. It was only by reviving long forgotten memories among the oldest of the men and women that I could gather up many of the customs of the past. One of my best informers, a woman, reproached me bitterly for encouraging her to think of things she had spent half her life in trying to forget: "You have made me live the old life once more; soon you will be going, and what shall I do then?"

[196] 115 The four transition rites which I shall describe are, however, practised even now among the people I visited, though sometimes in a simplified form owing to the great poverty which prevails. Though I have obtained details from many informants, the main contribution is that of four persons, two men and two women. It is to one of the women that I am most indebted. Hannah[1] !Amatis was, before she married among the ǂÂunin, a member of the //Khau-ǂGôan tribe, where she learnt all she knew from her grandfather. The latter was headman of his tribe, and as she was his favorite, and a very clever girl, he told her all the old lore of his tribe. She became my closest friend among the Hottentots, and to her I owe the framework of my information. She is now a woman well over 60 years of age. Louisa !Kabes is a somewhat younger woman, less intelligent, but very inquisitive. As a girl she used to hide where old and important people were talking, thinking that such as she were far away. She married into the family of the old Captain *Flet /'Zibib of Wildfel Sky*, who was long subsidised by the Cape Government, and who was a most intelligent old man. He died some eight years before I came among the people, well over eighty years of age. Gottlief //Âmib was the oldest of my informers, and both he and his brothers had been throughout their lives, not only because of their family connections, but because of their intelligence, the headmen of the captain of the Topnaars. Gottlief was a splendid informer and an admirable character, but he was becoming frail, and his memory was no longer at its best. He often said he was no use, and wished I might have clearer information on what were for him exceedingly weighty

[1] Most Hottentots have now a "Christian" name as well as a native one.

11. To the description of the somatic peculiarities of the Nama may be added a description of the psychic characteristics. The Nama is above all an emotional being. It is not difficult to rouse him to transports of joy and he who is able to rouse his joyous instincts has won his heart. In this state the Nama is willing, kind and hospitable; he will share his last crumb with his visitor and reveals clearly that he is indeed capable of noble sentiments. In this state, too, he is susceptible to religious impressions and the indiscrimination with which he surrenders to his emotions makes him an easy victim and a ready follower of visionaries. It need scarcely be added that dreams, visions, supernatural voices, etc., are fruitful seed in minds of such psychological structure. 152

12. On the other hand, when under the influence of disagreeable passions the Nama presents an altogether different and almost unrecognisable aspect. He is then sulky, unapproachable, impudent, faithless, unmerciful and cruel.

13. Both in his good and bad moods he is impelled by the desire to play the great man, to earn as much as possible with the least exertion. Yet he consumes his earnings in the most uneconomical manner and loves to preen himself in the grandest of attire. 156

14. Contrary to the descriptions of the older historians, the Nama is nowise slow of thought. He knows how to use his senses and he is able to translate for his use with great rapidity of thought, whatever his eye, ear and sense of smell have communicated to him. As far as rapidity of thought and imagination are concerned, the Nama takes the first place in South West, leaving the Hereros, Berg Damaras and Ovambos, even the so-called Bastards, far behind. He is musical, but the beauties of nature make no impression whatever on him. He is a great teller of tales and listens to tales with great attention, but for the past history of his people he has little interest, preferring a foreign language to his mother-tongue. 153 517

15. Will power, which gives character its type and reliability is but slightly developed in any of them. Principles count for little and a Nama will never fall back on a principle to explain his actions. It may be taken as an axiom that when the Nama acts under the influence of his agreeable instincts, the good qualities of his nature become evident in a surprisingly beautiful manner; but when he acts on his disagreeable impulses he can no longer be trusted and is capable of quite unsuspectedly evil actions. 152

H. Schinz, with whose judgment of the Nama I agree, writes of them: "They have their virtues and vices like every other people, but in order to judge them, we must descend from the pedestal of civilisation, often so artificial, and place ourselves in their past, their environment and 181

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
FX13 Hottentot FX13
NAMA

181 their mode of thought. Only then may we hope to obtain a clear impression of their psychic condition. Anyone who for any length of time has travelled in the company of Hottentots and has suffered starvation and thirst with them, has shared their joys and sorrows, will doubtless discern under that rough exterior a good heart, will learn to appreciate them and inevitably admit that their good points outweigh their bad."

II. Divisions and Distribution.

101 1. The origin of the tribal name "Hottentot" has not yet been cleared up. The old reports spell the name in different ways: Ottentoo, Hottnot, Hodmodod, Hottentott. It is assumed that the meaning attached to the word by the old settlers was "a stammerer" and that the name had reference to the peculiar clicks of the language, which give its speech a distinctive character. At any rate the name is not of Hottentot origin, nor had the Hottentots a distinct name to include all their tribes. Old reports state that they also called themselves "Quaiqua" or "Khoi-khoin"; but these names differ merely in spelling, not in meaning. He who knows the language sees at once that the word Quaiqua is an effort to fix the word Khoigua in writing. But Khoigua merely means men, while Khoin is the word for "people," and Khoi-khoin means people of pure race, *i.e.*, excellent people.

174 2. In all probability the Hottentot tribes migrated from the region of the Central African lakes in prehistoric times and moving westwards, crossed the Kunene, and then entered present-day South West Africa, passing between the Kaokoveld and Ovamboland. It is impossible now to say with any degree of certainty what the cause of the migration may have been, but it may be assumed that the numerous Bantu tribes pressed them southwards. In the case of a nomadic people, other causes, however, are also possible. At the time of the Hottentot immigration, South West Africa must have been well-nigh uninhabited, for the Herero had not yet occupied the land. In all probability the Bergdama laboured as herdsmen or servants for the nomadic Hottentots, whose language they had adopted, and first came to South West with their masters.

The traces and paintings of the Bushmen on rocks betray that in all probability they were the first inhabitants of the vast territory, which was to become the grazing and hunting ground of the most varied African tribes.

3. While the great majority of the Hottentots moved South with their herds, until they reached the utmost point, the very //Hui-//heib, *i.e.*, place of the snakes, where Cape Town now lies, some tribes settled in South West and led a nomadic life between the Orange and Swakop Rivers.

8: Dapper Q-4 (no date) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

The neck is moderately long, shoulders narrow, and arms rather long but quite slender and lean at the wrists. The hands are of good shape, and the fingers long, for they regard it as ornamental to let their finger nails grow like eagles' claws [38]). The belly with almost all of them is lean and slender and the buttocks protrude, with the result that the body, when stripped or lightly clad, is not evenly balanced. Their legs are fine and shapely, although often with slender calves; but the women especially have very pretty small feet. They are fleet-footed and so vigorous that some of them can easily keep up with a bull in full gallop and run it to a standstill [39]). They are endowed with male organs of more than usual size [40]).

The women are small in build, especially among the Kochoquas or Saldanhars. Some are found with features so regular (due in no small measure to the fact that they are not subject to measles or small-pox) that they could have been drawn with a pencil, except that they are somewhat flat in the nose. The married women, however, have exceedingly big bosoms, so big that their breasts, which hang loose and uncovered, can be passed back over the shoulders to suckle the children whom as a rule they carry there[41]). But this does not hold for the unmarried ones. The lining of the body appears to be loose, so that in certain places part of it dangles out [42]).

All the Kafirs or Hottentots are people bereft of all science and literature, very uncouth, and in intellect more like beasts than men. Some, however, through steady intercourse with our countrymen, gradually let the sparks of their human nature come to light, just as several at the Fort are also beginning to grasp the Dutch language.

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[41]) Among the Hottentots a child was suckled till it was two or three years old. The mother, when going out on her daily occupations, carried it with her on her back in a lambskin passed under her arms and knotted over the breast. Dapper's reference to the mother's breast being pushed up over her shoulder so that the baby can suck while still on her back is confirmed by several later writers (cf. Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples*, 288).

[42]) This very discreetly worded sentence refers to the well-established fact that among Hottentot women the labia minora are sometimes considerably elongated, and may project as much as 60 mm. beyond the rima pudendi. This hypertrophy, the so-called "Hottentot apron", has been regarded by some writers as artificially produced by manipulation, but Schultze, who has studied it carefully, maintains that it is a natural physiological

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XIV.

Their Character.

Their native barbarism and idle desert life, together with a wretched ignorance of all virtues, imposes upon their minds every form of vicious pleasure. In faithlessness, inconstancy, lying, cheating, treachery, and infamous concern with every kind of lust they exercise their villainy. They are so bloody in their inclinations as to practise their cruelties even upon their vanquished enemies after their death, by striking their arrows and weapons into their dead carcases. Thus in the hardness of their hearts, resisting every impulse of humanity, they persist in the savagery of their fore-fathers. They are so addicted to theft, that one neighbour does not stick to enrich himself by stealing the cattle of another. Those Africans who gave you your triumphal name, O Scipio Africanus, lofty exemplar of culture and sainthood, must have been more humane, more chaste, than these. And in addition to their shameful indulgence in vice, they secure for themselves a luxurious idleness: they never till the soil, they sow nothing, they reap nothing, they take no heed what they shall eat or drink. But the force of nature keeps them absolutely subject to their squalid ways. Wherefore whoever wishes to employ them as slaves must keep them hungry, never fully satisfied, speak to them with authority, and never fail to be as good as his word.

A consequence of their way of life is that premature old age seizes their lustful and usually exhausted frames. But since they are very careless, or rather utterly indifferent, about recording their age, no certain statement can be made as to their average span of life. For the exhaustion produced by their unbridled lusts is compensated by the temperance to which their indigence compels them. Their diet is a vegetable one. Our countrymen dispute as to whether some of them have not outlived the century; and some speculate as to this being the reason for the great ages of men in antiquity.

Furthermore, from their tenderest years they have such an insatiable appetite for tobacco (infants of less than 8 months old can often be seen smoking), that, when they have the chance of living for ever free from the restraint of laws and slavery, they yet prefer servitude to going without tobacco, often slaving at the nod of a master the whole day in return for a scanty portion of the weed. So extravagant and insatiable is their desire for it.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

The women live more sparingly; they are not allowed beef, nor fresh milk, but mutton occasionally. So much do they despise the women.

But gluttons as they are they are not without intelligence. Their minds are wonderfully powerful in remembering a kindness or an injury, fearless of danger, confident in themselves, and contented with their lot. Whether they are urged by dire poverty or blessed with a prosperous flock, they are always the same. But if one of the more distinguished should be living in want, they are touched by a slight feeling of pity (and in the setting of their enormous vices this virtue flashes like a jewel) and contribute a sheep or a calf to the man bereft of flocks and herds. When they have once formed an opinion they are very slow to change their minds. They do not covet gold or silver like other mortals; in truth the desire of riches exists only where they are in use; and ignorance of vice is often of more service among them than knowledge of virtue among other people. To sum up they afford a clear proof that even a mild climate can produce monstrous dispositions.

Among this savage and depraved people some are distinguished for shrewd and subtle understanding. I have spoken for instance with three Hottentot women: one, Aeva[54]), was a civil, modest body, of rational discourse, who, being pretty well acquainted with the Dutch and Portuguese tongues unbidded to me many secrets of her race; the second, Cornelia, having exchanged her impious ignorance of

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too, named Eva, long ago taken from the African brood in her tender childhood by the Hon: van Riebeeck, and educated in his house as well as brought to the knowledge of the Christian faith, and being thus transformed from a female Hottentot almost into a Netherland woman, was married to a certain Chief Surgeon of this Residency, by whom she had three children still living, and some others which had died. Since his death however at Madagascar, she had brought forth as many illegitimate ones, and for the rest, led such an irregular life, that for a long while the desire would have existed of getting rid of her, had it not been for the hope of the conversion of this brutal aboriginal, which was always still hovering between. Hence in order not to be accused of tolerating her adulterous and debauched life, she had at various times been relegated to Robben Island, where, though she could obtain no drink, she abandoned herself to immorality. Pretended reformation induced the Authorities many times to call her back to the Cape, but as soon as she returned, she, like the dogs, always returned to her own vomit, so that finally she quenched the fire of her sensuality by death, affording a manifest example that nature, however closely and firmly bounded by imprinted principles, nevertheless at its own time triumphing over all prevents, again rushes back to its inborn qualities" Cf. *July 28, 1676*. The entry for the following day tells us that "the body of the deceased Hottentot, Eva, was, notwithstanding her unchristian life, buried to-day according to Christian usage in the church of the new Castle".

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

To the right reverend and learned gentleman 000

Greetings.

You say that you receive great pleasure from my letters; I feel the same and perhaps more from the expressions of your goodwill towards me, so full of charm and thought, with which you honour me. I can never read nor relish them enough, and from the bottom of my heart I thank the Powers above through whose kindness there has been granted me, perhaps to test me, some little share of this world's goods so that they may see a proof of my pious devotion to you. I beg therefore etc. etc. etc. (N.B. Here a page or two touching on private matters has been omitted.)

I am astonished that Rumour, never bearing a clear report, should have acquired such strength in her course and proved so tenacious of falsehood that those half-truths that are spread abroad about our Africans should have reached even your ears. I found this people with one accord in their general daily life living in harmony with Nature's law, hospitable to every race of men, open, dependable, lovers of truth and justice, not utterly unacquainted with the worship of some God, endowed, within their own limits, with a rare nimbleness of mother wit, and having minds receptive of instruction. 181

My rash Muse was swept away by youthful prejudices when I formerly sang:

Though men, they scarce deserve the name of man.[1]

And for this fault I now seek pardon and sing a palinode; for, alas for the disgrace! It is through the faults of our countrymen, who have forgotten their ancestral ways, as I now plainly see and recognise, that the natives have been changed for the worse, and have become secretive, suspicious and shut away from us. From us they have learned blasphemy, perjury, strife, quarrelling, drunkenness, trickery, brigandage, theft, ingratitude, unbridled lust for for what is not one's own, misdeeds unknown to them before, and, among other crimes of deepest die, the accursed lust of gold. Behold the glorious priests of the Christian

[1] This would seem to suggest an earlier account of the Hottentots by Grevenbroek, of which, however, I have been unable to find any record.

[p. 173]

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot
South Nguni FX17

mysteries! Behold the strenuous champions of Divine Truth! On the last day at the last judgment they shall be burned in the middle ditch of the amphitheatre by these barbarians. "This is the final spark of the woe to come."

They are beyond belief patient of heat, cold, fasting, and every kind of toil, but utterly impatient of injury, and prone to vengeance. Wherefore if a louse or a gnat sting them they put it into their mouth for no other reason than that by the law of retaliation they may chop, grind, and crush it with their teeth, and spit it out. Nothing pleases them more, they openly boast, than to return evil for evil, nor can they easily be at rest till they have satisfied their minds by the torture of their enemies. They are offensive to look at, savage in their dress, wild in their mode of life, but warlike and unaccustomed to slavery. They are as swift as the wind, often outstripping horses in fleetness of foot and Cretans in swimming.

In whiteness of soul they are superior to many of our countrymen, and in whiteness of body they are equal to some, and, in my judgment, would perhaps be so to all, if they cared for cleanliness. But as things are, what with fat and the smothing heat of the sun and the ahagy pigment they put on their faces, they have grown dark and are of a swarthy brown colour. They have lively bright eyes, and the whites of their eyes and their teeth are fairer than snow. The pupils of the eyes are of a shade between brown and yellow. They have small feet and feminine hands; they are lightly built, and almost all snub-nosed. Those who live near our Cape are of middle height; but the inhabitants of the remote parts of this region are shaggy fellows, with taller and sturdier frames, and with frizzy hair.[1] Among them has been seen a king, Longurio, twelve foot high, with hair all over his body thicker than a water spaniel's.[2] To these latter the shortness of our countrymen is a matter of contempt. Sometimes they are bald in front; sometimes they wear beard and moustache and shave their heads. The women have large breasts. With the rarest exceptions I never saw one among them that was marked from birth, fat, hunch-backed, squinting, or that had varicose veins, a swollen paunch, flat feet or spindle-shanks, or one that went bow-legged or knock-kneed or had misshapen limbs of any kind, nor did I ever see one blind of an eye nor halt in his speech, nor